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To cite this Article: Taitto, P. (2017) When diversity is the only unity - how to train comrehensiveness in EU crisis management. In Elisa Norvanto, Hanne Dumur-Laanila (Eds.) Contemporary Peace Operations - from theory to practice, 93-99.

URL: <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-25-2945-2>

“When Diversity is the Only Unity – How to Train for a Comprehensive Approach in EU Crisis Management

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Introduction

There is no doubt that training increases the effectiveness of any EU field mission, since trained personnel are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to be operational immediately after deployment, and to thereby contribute more effectively to the implementation of the mission mandate. One of the key factors, when preparing personnel for complex, multidisciplinary operations, is to enhance the understanding of other actors and the Comprehensive Approach.

All of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions operate in the framework of a comprehensive approach. There are currently more than 5,000 persons serving in six military missions and operations and in nine civilian CSDP Missions. Civilian missions contain fewer than 2,500 persons and half of them are locally recruited staff, whereas the military missions and operations have approximately the same number of people, mainly military personnel seconded from EU Member States and third states. Personnel competences are the most important capability in the CSDP missions and operations.

Civilian and military cooperation was the buzzword of 1990s crisis management, and since then it has been acknowledged that responding to crises and conflicts requires an even broader context of cooperation. In 2017, comprehensive crisis management means the effective, coordinated use of different tools and capabilities, such as conflict prevention, diplomatic activity, economic support and sanctions, developmental cooperation, and lastly, civilian and military intervention. So, crisis management is a subtle blend of activities that the international community can carry out.

“Consolidating a comprehensive approach to EU security is dependent on ensuring sufficient, regular and systematic training” captures the essence of one of the recent IECEU project research studies.¹⁵¹ “Train as you fight” is a slogan in many military organisations, and the motto of the EU is: “United in Diversity”. This article presents views on how to plan and conduct training in the spirit of these mottos and principles, and how to organize CSDP mission related training in a way that deploying personnel would understand the EU Comprehensive Approach in a better way in the field.

¹⁵¹ IECEU review 1.3 of civil-military synergies. <http://www.ieceu-project.com> accessed 29 April 2017

The EU Comprehensive Approach

The current understanding and definitions of a comprehensive approach reflect the present response to conflicts and crises. International organizations hold their policies and concepts for different political purposes, and hence it is hard to find one single definition for a comprehensive approach. UNSCR 2086 on Multidimensional peacekeeping and ‘EU’s Comprehensive Approach to external conflict and crises’, both written in 2013, laid the foundations for a joined-up policy to more effectively respond to the causes of instability.

The EU Comprehensive Approach (CA) to external crisis and conflicts is a description and vision of how the EU should improve its capabilities. The CA is based on the shared analysis and common vision on how to best respond to crises. The CA focuses on conflict prevention and emphasizes that internal and external operators should work closely together and always commit in planning to seek a long-term solution.¹⁵²

The EU Comprehensive Approach corresponds in some parts to the UN Integrated Mission Concept, which means a peacekeeping operation where there is a shared vision between all UN actors of the strategic objective of the UN presence at the country level, and that brings together all UN components (security, political, humanitarian, human rights and development). The UN has however, progressed to a more advanced system for coordination by also introducing an integrated mission command structure.

The Comprehensive Approach has been introduced in the EEAS and for the Member States. The EEAS has successfully implemented CA as concept and searched for common ground with other EU actors – in particular the European Commission – on its interpretation. Some structural changes have also been implemented by establishing a new division, called PRISM, within the EEAS to further coordinate conflict prevention, rule of law, an integrated approach, SSR and mediation. CSDP mission planning has benefitted from this shared analysis and vision as the Political Framework for Crisis Approach (PFCA) has developed over the last years. However, on the operational level much needs to be done.

The Comprehensive Approach is only as strong as the personnel deploying in the theatre of operations apply it. Therefore, training the personnel to understand and to act in the spirit of the Comprehensive Approach is of the utmost importance.

Different audiences – same training needs?

“Training for CSDP is driven by requirements, not events,” states the new EU policy on training for CSDP. CIVCOM and the EUMC have the responsibility for defining civilian and military training requirements respectively for CSDP training activities through their specialised training groups: the EU Military Training

¹⁵²EU Comprehensive Approach to external conflict and crisis. Joint Communication, 11 December 2013

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Group (EUMTG) and the EU Civilian Training Group (EUCTG). The working groups are also responsible for defining quality assurance standards and overseeing their implementation in CSDP training and education, in accordance with international educational standards, civ/mil standards developed by European Security and Defence College (ESDC) and the EU Qualification Framework.¹⁵³

Furthermore, the evolving nature of missions and the security environment itself creates new requirements. The CSDP Training Requirements may derive from political guidance, operational requirements of the EU generic civilian and military tasks, and new capabilities. CSDP lessons identified annually provide recommendations on what to include in the mission related training.¹⁵⁴

For the *civilian* CSDP missions the general essential and desirable skills and experience required for every job in every mission are presented in the Call for Contributions. Applicants must meet at least the general essential qualifications and experience before they can apply for a position within a mission. Training is mentioned as a desirable skill, so it is not necessary to undergo any CSDP specific training before recruitment. Furthermore, an essential requirement for civilian personnel is that the candidates “must have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, both written and oral”. In addition, future mission members “must have the ability to work professionally as a member of a team, in task forces and working groups with mixed composition (e.g. civilian and military staff)”.¹⁵⁵

For *military* operations, the force generation is a slightly different process. Member States agree on their respective contributions, and fill in the previously agreed positions with predefined ranks and qualifications based on the NATO qualification system. The EU Military Staff (EUMS) has examined the CSDP specific training requirements and concluded that the NATO training system covers most of the basic tasks for envisaged military scenarios. However, it was identified that the EU has some distinct military training requirements and they need to be further elaborated.¹⁵⁶

The training policy continues, that, “Appropriate training is a prerequisite of deployment, so all staff recruited for CSDP missions or operations shall receive certificated pre-deployment training prior to deployment.”¹⁵⁷ So, training complying with EEAS standards is required at the time of deployment. Pre-deployment training in particular is important for the coherence in a multinational force or HQ. Pre-deployment is an important part of mission preparation and training can make the management culture of the CSDP missions more uniform and promote a European identity among the participants.

¹⁵³ Draft EEAS Implementing Guidelines for the EU Policy on Training, 2016

¹⁵⁴ Draft EEAS Implementing Guidelines for the EU Policy on Training, 2016

¹⁵⁵ CPCC, Force Generation for the civilian CSDP Missions: A planning guide for Member States Seconding Authorities, 19 September 2016

¹⁵⁶ Bodescu, A. 2014, p. 22.

¹⁵⁷ EU Policy on Training for CSDP. 1 July 2016

The European Security and Defence College has developed a specific pre-deployment training (PDT) for CSDP missions. During the planning phase of this training, the training needs analysis revealed that the core of the training should be fostering a European identity and enhancing the understanding of the CSDP Missions' functioning principles. Furthermore, it was identified that the EU Comprehensive Approach should be considered a cross-cutting theme in pre-deployment training courses for both civilian and military audiences.¹⁵⁸

Civilian and military mission members possess different educational and professional backgrounds. Each function requires specific civilian and military expertise that can be achieved through relevant education and working experience. However, much of the generic training requirements are the same: All should obtain basic knowledge and skills on working in the conflict areas. Furthermore, all should understand what the EU is, why the EU is deploying the mission, and what the external actions of the EU are all about, since, after all, the personnel are there to represent the Union.

Plenty of CSDP training is available

“Training for CSDP is a shared responsibility between the EU Member States, its institutions and dedicated bodies, and the training of personnel for CSDP missions and operations is primarily the responsibility of the Member States.”¹⁵⁹ Training for CSDP missions can be provided in various phases, settings and frameworks. Training activities can be classified as basic, advanced, pre-deployment and in-mission training.¹⁶⁰ Pre-deployment training (PDT) is the most important type of the training and it should be organised immediately before the mission deployment. PDT aims to harmonise the management culture of CSDP missions and ensure that the persons concerned receive the knowledge and skills they will need to be fully operational from the beginning of their tour of duty.

The sole training network specifically for CSDP is the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), mandated by all EU Member States. The objective of the ESDC is to provide Member States and EU Institutions with knowledgeable personnel able to work efficiently on CSDP matters. In pursuing this objective, the College makes a major contribution to a better understanding of CSDP in the overall context of CFSP and to promoting a common European security culture. The ESDC organises approximately 80 CSDP related training events annually and all training courses are offered to civilian (including diplomats), military and police personnel. In 2014-2015 the European Security and Defence College developed specific pre-deployment training (PDT) for CSDP missions, targeted for personnel already selected, but not yet deployed on civilian and military CSDP missions.

¹⁵⁸ ESDC Curriculum: Pre-deployment training for CSDP Missions and Operations. Activity 33. Steering Committee 17 June 2016

¹⁵⁹ EU Policy on Training for CSDP, 1 July 2016

¹⁶⁰ The training types and terminology are described in the Implementing Guidelines annexed to the training policy. *Draft EEAS Implementing Guidelines for the EU Policy on Training*, 30 June 2016

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Another network college at the European level, working closely with the ESDC, is the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training, CEPOL. According to the renewed mandate since 1 July 2016 “CEPOL shall support Union missions developing and providing training to prepare law enforcement officials for participation in Union missions.”¹⁶¹

In addition, EU Commission Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI) funded projects, such as ENTRi and EUPST provide advanced training for experts deploying on crisis management missions. Both of the projects limit their training audiences to either civilian or to law enforcement authorities respectively.¹⁶² It is noted that FPI funded projects are not aimed at enhancing purely EU capabilities, but also those of the UN, OSCE and AU.

Security training programmes and standards are a perpetual challenge in the EU. The training requirements were already laid down in 2009, when the Council set the rules for deploying civilian personnel to medium and high-risk areas. At that time an e-learning tool (eHEST), was developed for the low-risk missions and a training course was created for the high-risk areas (HEAT). After the Lisbon treaty and establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) crisis management structures were developed, and security structures within the EEAS started to drift apart. Headquarters for civilian missions (CPCC) with its security coordinator currently steers security management in missions, and EEAS Field Security is developing a security system for the EEAS and EU delegations. Due to scarce resources, the CPCC is still relying on the 2009 standards and materials, whereas an advanced security training system, including advanced e-learning courses (BASE and SSAFE), has been developed for the EEAS delegations. Furthermore, the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) and the European Commission’s European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) have imposed their own security standards and training systems for field personnel.

In addition, two more training systems outside the scope of CSDP, that can complement the competences needed in the crisis management, are the Union Civil Protection Mechanism training programme and training for the election observers. Learning more about these training systems could be beneficial for the CSDP, too.

There have also been initiatives to develop on-line portals to strengthen the availability of relevant training courses. One of them is the “Schoolmaster” database, a portal that Member States have decided will be a central platform for training coordination. Schoolmaster contains information on all courses delivered through the EU with relevance to CSDP. In April 2017, there were 22 training courses on the list, of which

¹⁶¹ Regulation (EU) 2015/2219 of the European Parliament and of the Council, *on the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL)*, 25 November 2015.

¹⁶² Information on the two EC-funded projects and on the activities of ESCD can be found at the following websites: <http://eeas.europa.eu/esdc>, www.eupst.eu and www.entriforcem.eu. Accessed 17 April 2017

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approximately half are conducted in the framework of the CSDP. It is obvious that the number does not reflect the real availability of the courses, it rather describes the general awareness of the portal.¹⁶³

As presented, there is plenty of CSDP specific training available, and some of the courses do not limit participation or exclude any of the personnel categories. Thousands of persons receive CSDP related training every year, but according to vague sets of statistics¹⁶⁴ it seems that non-trained personnel are those selected to join missions. There is plenty of space for improvement when it comes to EU internal coordination and cooperation in the field of training. However, many good practices exist in training networks, e.g. the ESDC model of including a comprehensive approach to pre-deployment training and inviting civilian, military and police to the same training audience.

Conclusions

Preparing personnel for field missions that operate in the framework of the EU Comprehensive Approach, requires specific knowledge and multiple skills. Adapting these skills and knowledge, can lead to the envisaged outcome of adapting European security culture and European identity. Learning the required knowledge and skills can be achieved in several ways. Some guiding principles could be:

- ensure that training course curricula includes the awareness raising of other EU actors in the field
- benchmark training curricula learning outcomes with other actors, and try to streamline them
- include other actors' mandates, principles and terminology in the training course curricula
- train different actors together when appropriate in order to facilitate peer-learning
- exercise soft skills: communication, negotiation skills, and trust building
- share actively good practices on how to enhance comprehensiveness

Multidiscipline international crisis management exercises, such as the EU's MultiLayer and VIKING, are excellent platforms to train personnel for the Comprehensive Approach. In exercises, different crisis management actors solve problems, conduct joint analysis and planning, and learn how to interact in a safe learning environment. Training exercises have been also identified as one of the areas of deeper EU-NATO cooperation¹⁶⁵.

The new training policy states that training for CSDP should respect adult learning principles. Therefore, developing skills and knowledge needed in a comprehensive approach, should be a constructive process, where the learner's previously adapted competences are recognised and utilised. The learning process begins always

¹⁶³ <https://goalkeeper.eeas.europa.eu/>. Accessed 29 April 2017

¹⁶⁴ 1)PSC, Civilian crisis management pre-deployment training - report on survey results and elements for way ahead , 10976/11, 8 June 2011. 2)CPCC survey on training. August 2015

¹⁶⁵ The Joint Declaration signed by Presidents of the European Council Donald Tusk, of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in Warsaw on 8 July 2016

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by screening what competences participants have and those competences that can be utilised to enhance others' learning processes. Knowledge needed in a complex multifaceted crisis environment is therefore mutually constructed by future mission members and later on utilised together. This socio-constructivist learning approach can create a framework and theoretical basis for a training system focussed on the Comprehensive Approach.

Although many deficiencies exist in the various EU training networks, the EU deploys highly qualified experts to its missions. Globally seen, the EU has the most training potential for peacebuilding and peacekeeping, and now it is time for the EU to take advantage and further develop one of its own strengths, which is training for crisis management.

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